

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

AID-05 /065 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W-JMSEGARS:DFP

APPROVED BY AF-EWMULCAHY

AF/W-JKBISHOP

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R 100000Z SEP 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 214584

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PBOR, LI

SUBJECT:AMBASSADOR PEAL'S MEETING IN AF

SUMMARY: AT HIS REQUEST AMBASSADOR PEAL MET AT LENGTH WITH DEPUTY ASST. SEC. MULCAHY (AF) SEPT 3 TO BRING HIMSELF UP TO DATE ON BUREAU ACTIVITIES AFTER BEING AWAY FROM WASHINGTON FOR GREATER PORTION OF YEAR. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES DISCUSSED DURING LENGTHY MEETING; COMPLETE DETAILS COVERED IN MEMCON BEING POUCHED:

1. DENNIS' FOURTH OF JULY COMMENTS: PEAL EXPRESSED REGRET OVER WHAT HE TERMED FOREIGN MINISTER'S UNFORTUNATE REMARKS. HE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH MANY OTHER LIBERIANS ALSO HOLD VIEW THAT REMARKS UNFORTUNATE, THEY NEVERTHELESS SHARE DENNIS' BELIEF THAT US INTEREST IN LIBERIA ON DECLINE. PEAL CITED CURRENT LEVEL OF US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS EXAMPLE THIS DECLINE, AND NOTED FRG HAS REPLACED US AS SINGLE LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF AID TO LIBERIA. MULCAHY
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TOLD PEAL IT EXTREMELY DISTURBING WHEN CLOSE FRIENDS BEGIN

TO QUESTION EACH OTHERS' LOYALTY, BUT PERHAPS WE CAN ASSURE PRESIDENT TOLBERT OF CONTINUED GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD HE VISIT THE US LATER THIS MONTH. ON MATTER OF WHO GIVING MORE AID MULCAHY TOLD

PEAL US DOES NOT MIND COMPETITION IN THIS AREA AND WE WELCOME FRG'S INITIATIVES. HE ALSO CITED CONGRESSIONALLY IMPOSED RESTRAINTS ON LEVELS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE BUT NOTED THAT BLACK CAUCUS IS INTERESTED IN US PROVIDING MORE AID FOR AFRICA. MULCAHY NOTED RECENT US CONTRIBUTIONS TO LIBERIA'S DEVELOPMENT, WHICH INCLUDE 1.3 MILLION DOLLARS IN MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND REMINDED PEAL THAT DESPITE SUBSTANTIAL CUTS IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE LIBERIA RECEIVED 4 MILLION DOLLARS MORE IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE THAN THE AMOUNT ORIGINALLY PROGRAMMED FOR FY 76.

2. CIA INVOLVEMENT IN STEVE TOLBERT'S DEATH: PEAL SAID RECENT MEDIA ACCOUNTS OF WEST AFRICAN PILOT STORY ALLEGING CIA INVOLVEMENT IN STEVE TOLBERT'S DEATH CAUSING SERIOUS AND UNUSUAL PUBLIC CONCERN IN LIBERIA. PEAL SAID THAT BECAUSE IT IS AFRICAN CUSTOM FOR ACCUSED PERSON TO FORCEFULLY AND IMMEDIATELY DENY ACCUSATION OF WRONG DOING, CONTINUED USG SILENCE IN WAKE THIS ALLEGATION WILL ONLY EXACERBATE SITUATION BY LEADING MANY TO BELIEVE ALLEGATION TRUE. MULCAHY POINTED OUT WEST AFRICAN PILOT IS SOVIET- SUPPORTED, THEREFORE ITS CONTENTS HIGHLY SUSPECT AND SHOULD NOT BE DIGNIFIED BY COMMENT. MULCAHY ALSO EXPRESSED AMAZEAMT KNOWLEDGEABLE LIBERIANS WOULD LEND CREDENCE TO STORY WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING IT OUT. HE ASKED IF PRESIDENT TOLBERT ACCEPTED ALLEGATION. PEAL DID NOT KNOW.

3. PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S IMPENDING VISIT: PEAL HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH RANGEL ON THIS SUBJECT. ALTHOUGH DELIGHTED OVER CAUCUS' INITIATIVE, PEAL SAID HE BELIEVES INVITATION TO ADDRESS DINNER NOT INDUCEMENT ENOUGH FOR TOLBERT TO ACCEPT, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW PRESIDENT HAS BEEN HERE OFTEN IN RECENT YEARS AND HAS GONE AWAY EMPTY-HANDED. PEAL ACKNOWLEDGED GOL RECEIVED BENEFITS FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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LAST TRIP, I.E., PRESIDENT FORD'S ASSURANCE OF USG SUPPORT FOR LIBERIA'S POSITION ON ENERGY SECURITY TRANSPORTATION ACT, STATED NONETHELESS THIS TYPE BENEFIT DOES NOT REACH MAN IN STREET, WHO NEEDS POSITIVE PROOF OF OUR GOOD INTENTIONS. MULCAHY PROMISED TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS MATTER WITH RANGEL.

4.AFRICAN AMBASSADORS SECOND MEETING WITH SECRETARY:

AMBASSDOR PEAL MISSED FIRST MEETING AND IS ANXIOUS TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR PROMISED SECOND SESSION. HE BELIEVES TIMING IS RIGHT SINCE EASING MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM HOPEFULLY WILL OCCUPY LESSER PORTION SECRETARY'S TIME. PEAL STATED THAT HE PLANS HOLD MEETINGS WITH AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN ORDER DEVELOP AGENDA WHICH WOULD BE PRESENTED TO SECRETARY

PRIOR TO MEETING, THUS ENABLING HIM TO REFINE HIS THINKING ON WHAT PEAL CONSIDERS KEY AFRICAN ISSUES. MULCAHY OFFERED TO WORK WITH PEAL ON PLANS FOR MEETING.

5. TOLBERT INAUGURATION: PEAL NOTED THAT PRESIDENT TOLBERT BEING INAUGURATED JAN. 5, 1976 AND EXPRESSED HOPE US CONTEMPLATING SENDING "MEANINGFUL DELEGATION" TO MONROVIA AS POSITIVE INDICATION US/LIBERIA RELATIONS STILL STRONG. AMBASSADOR MULCAHY INDICATED WE AWARE THIS EVENT AND WERE MERELY AWATING SOME INDICATION GOL'S DESIRE BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, DEATHS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE214584
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JMSEGARS:DFF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750313-0119
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750965/aaaacfwa.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBASSADOR PEAL'S MEETING IN AF SUMMARY: AT HIS REQUEST AMBASSADOR PEAL MET AT LENGTH
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, LI, US, CIA, (TOLBERT, WILLIAM R)
To: MONROVIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006